



Branson Briefs

A monthly e-Newsletter for the community providing information about upcoming activities, projects and events in the city of Branson

Volume I, Issue 6

City of Branson
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Branson, MO 65616
417-334-3345
417-334-6095 fax
www.bransonmo.gov

Hours
8-a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Mayor
Raeanne Presley

Board of Aldermen
Stan Barker
Cris Bohinc
Rick Davis
Bob McDowell
Stephen Marshall
Sandra Williams

City Administrator
Dean Kruithof

**Board of Aldermen
meeting schedule**
2nd & 4th Tuesday
of each month
7 p.m.
Council Chambers
City Hall



**City offices
will be closed
Friday
July 3 in
observance of
Independence Day**

City sales tax up, Tourism tax down

The city's sales tax revenues are up 2 percent through June, but tourism tax revenue was down 4.7 percent when compared to 2008. This period is from October through June. The city's fiscal year is October to September; however, beginning in 2010, the city will go to a calendar year budget, January to December.

The tourism tax is levied on tourist related businesses like ticketed attractions including theaters, lodging and restaurants. A bright spot in the tourism revenue was the fact theaters are up 3.3 percent this fiscal year compared to last year.

So far this fiscal year revenues have exceeded expenditures by \$1.3 million, which shows city departments are staying on track with their budgets. As work begins on the 2010 budget, city officials will continue streamlining expenses in each department to stay ahead of the economic crisis.



Road & bridge update

Lake Taneycomo Bridge: In the latest design by MoDOT, the new bridge will slope gradually down from the Hollister side to the Branson side where it will connect with Branson Landing Blvd. in the south parking lot near the wood-fenced boat storage area owned by Bass Pro Shop. The final slope will be on fill that will create a ramp taking traffic down the 14 feet elevation from the bridge surface to Branson Landing Blvd. level. This design was necessary due to flood plain considerations.

While the old bridge has about 30-feet of clearance between the bridge and lake, the new bridge at its lowest point will have about 15-feet of clearance. MoDOT has talked to the owners of Branson Landing Marina and were told this would not create a problem for the excursion boats because they don't go that far upstream. There will be ample clearance for sport boats including pontoons, but not sailboats.

Accessible sidewalk ramps along Highway 76: Beginning in early August, MoDOT will build accessibility sidewalk ramps at each driveway along west Highway 76 from Roark Valley Road to Gretna Road. It's a total of 390 ramps. Work will be done from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. to reduce traffic impact. Work should be completed by year's end.

Fall Creek Road extension: Construction of Fall Creek Road continues on schedule. The next step will be removing the 30,000 cubic yards of rock visible at the intersection with Roark Valley Road. The fill is being relocated to a site on Missouri 248 behind Culvers. Once the fill is gone, people will be able to see where the new street is coming through.

Work begins on the installation of a modular retaining wall on the north end of the Fall Creek Road project needed to stabilize the rock outcroppings. The wall system being used is new to the Branson area, and when completed will have a front face made completely of soil – no exposed concrete block. This should result in a green vegetated surface that looks good plus provides the needed reinforcement for the unstable rock. The project should be finished this summer.



Buckle up those seat belts

The Branson Police Department is strictly enforcing Missouri's seat belt law this summer. When an officer does a routine traffic stop on a motorist, if no one in the car is wearing a seat belt, he or she will be ticketed in addition to any other violations.

State statistics show that a driver has a 1 in 32 chance of being killed in a car crash if not wearing a seat belt.

Citizens' Service Request Line

If you need a question answered about the city, or need to report a problem or express a concern, contact the Citizens' Service Request line at 337-8502. The line is open 24/7 and the city will respond to your request within five working days.

You can also e-mail a request from the city of Branson website www.bransonmo.gov.

In 2008, the city received and responded to 179 citizen requests.

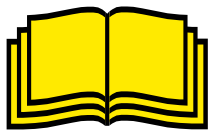
During 2008, the city produced 1.3 billion gallons of drinking water. The peak month for water production is July, which is also the month with the most visitors in town.

Liquor education class July 23

The next city sponsored liquor education class will be held July 23 at 9:30 a.m. in Council Chambers at Branson City Hall. These classes are for servers and sellers of alcohol. The training is required of all businesses selling liquor in the city of Branson or businesses that are in the process of obtaining a liquor license.

Recycle your phone books

With new telephone directories distributed to residents and businesses, the city wants to encourage people in the Branson area to recycle their old phone books. And to make it convenient, recycling bins have been placed in several locations. They include the **Country Mart stores in Branson and Hollister, Home Depot in Branson Hills, Wal-Mart on Highway 76 and the Branson Recycle center on Compton Drive.**



The local Girl Scouts will even pick up old directories from businesses because they receive five cents per directory from the Springfield company that turns the phone books into cat and dog litter. If you have directories to recycle, call Stephanie at 334-6082 to arrange for local Girl Scouts to pick them up.

Keep your property mowed

Property owners in Branson are reminded to keep their weeds and grass mowed. City code states grass and weeds cannot exceed seven inches. When a property is in violation, the city's planning and development department, which enforces this section of the code, attempts to notify the property owner prior to employing enforcement action.

Once a notice of violation has been issued, if remedial action is not taken by the property owner, the city will then employ a mowing service to cut the grass, and the owner will be billed for the service. If payment is not made within a designated time period, the city could file a lien on the property in violation to recoup the mowing expense.



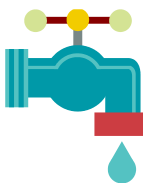
City water quality report released

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources has released the city of Branson's annual Water Quality Report for the 2008 calendar year, and there were no violations of water quality standards.

The report is an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirement of all water systems, both municipal and private. The Missouri DNR regulates all water systems and requires testing on a regular basis to ensure its safety. The purpose of the Water Quality Report is to inform residents of a community about the quality of their water including the elements in the water based on tests performed during the year.

The report must mention any violations of water quality standards that might have occurred during 2008. The city of Branson had no violations.

Copies of the 2008 EPA Water Quality Report are available for public inspection at the Branson Public Works Department, 616 West Pacific. It's also available on the city's website by clicking on "Reports" on the home page.



Downtown walking tours

City officials joined downtown merchants for two walking tours in June of historic downtown for the purpose of obtaining ideas for improving the appearance of the business district to attract more visitors.

As downtown merchants pointed out concerns and made suggestions about enhancing downtown, city staff took notes. Among the suggestions were murals on the sides of buildings, power washing sidewalks, markers to showcase the history of downtown, cleaning up the backs of buildings and keeping the weeds down.

The city will compile the responses from citizens and have future meetings to see how merchants and city can work together in addressing these issues.



Branson judge elected to state board

Branson Municipal Court Judge Tom Motley was elected to the Board of Directors of the Missouri Municipal and Associate Circuit Judges Association. The purpose of the Association is to assist and train its members to better perform their duties as judges, and to maintain the highest possible judicial standards in the courts. Motley has been Branson's municipal judge for the past eight years.



New trail in Branson

Another hiking trail has been completed by the city for the natural enjoyment of residents and visitors. The rustic 3/4 mile Woods Trail runs from Roark Valley Road near the entrance to The Woods development westward to a natural waterfall.

The developer of The Woods gave this property to the city for a nature trail. The city's engineering department designed the path on site and public works crews completed it keeping costs at a minimum. Eventually, the city plans extending the Woods Trail westward to connect with the Henning State Park. Also, the city received state grant money to build a sidewalk from Shepherd of the Hills Expressway near the B.T. Bones restaurant to the trail's entrance.

Branson gets national exposure on Landing storm water sewers

CE News magazine as well as CENews.com featured an extensive article on the storm water runoff system at Branson Landing as an example of protecting water resources— in this case Lake Taneycomo. Working with its consulting engineers, Walter P. Moore of Kansas City, Branson installed state-of-the-art filtering units in storm water sewers throughout Branson Landing. This equipment cleans, better than ever, storm water runoff from not just Branson Landing, but all of downtown.

The system collects storm water runoff from the upstream watershed as well as the Landing development, routes it safely through the development and provides treatment and filtering at the downstream end just before discharge to Lake Taneycomo.

CE News magazine and CENews.com are resources for civil engineers that report trends, technologies and news.



The filtering units of the storm water runoff system at Branson Landing

City adding more storm warning sirens

The Branson Fire Department will be adding two more storm warning sirens inside the city. They will be located near the Branson High School and on Bird Road near



Branson Hills Parkway. With the installation of these warning devices later this summer, the city will have a total of 21 sirens.

No more nightly rentals in neighborhoods

The Branson Board of Aldermen has outlawed single family homes in residential areas to be used as nightly rentals for periods of less than one month.

The city has received complaints about homeowners renting out their homes for nightly and weekly rentals in areas not zoned for that type of business.

Under the new law, the city will not grant a business license for any nightly rental in an R-1 residential area.

Long time city employee retires

Carol Snowden retired June 30 after more than 22 years as the utility billing accountant in the city of Branson's finance department. When Carol started in 1987, the city had 1,700 water and sewer customers. Today those customers total 8,400. We wish her the very best in her retirement.



Visitor update

From January through April 2009:

- Overall visitation up 5.4% from 2008
- 52% of the visitors came from outside a 301 mile radius
- Spending per party was \$765 compared to \$638 in 2008
- First time visitors increased to 27% from 15% in '08
- Visitors stayed longer -- 4.7 days compared to 3.9 days in '08
- Average adult age of visitor was 59 compared to 55 in 2008.